A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, August 11. 1709.

I Am now turn'd Beggar—and am prompting you to Charity to the *Palatines*—I ſhall make no Harangues upon the Nature of Charity, or the Duty of Charity. I ſee but little Force in the Arguments, either of Philoſophy or Religion, to influence this Generation—We are got ſo many Degrees above both, that to talk that Way would be *ſo* out of Faſhion, *ſo* odd, *ſo bizarr*, *ſo* ungentteel—no Body would mind me——Tell this Age of *giving to the Poor*, and its being *lending to the Lord, who will certainly repay it!* —'Tis good Divinity, but it won't do in *Exchange-Alley*—I never found any of that Stock would ſell there—*The Fund* is not good *in their Language*—For tho' the Promiſe mentions Payment of the Principal Debt, *they ſay*—there's nothing mention'd of paying the Intereſt, nor any Time fix'd for the Demand. The Bank of *England* bears a better Price there, than the Bank in Heaven; one riſes to 30 *per Cent.* Advance, and the other is fallen to juſt 100 *per Cent.* Diſcount—No Buyers.

'Tis hard indeed it ſhould be ſo—and it ſeems the only Fund that is left us clear of Stock-jobbing—But the Reaſons are plain—the Stock does not riſe; (1.) becauſe the Value is real, not imaginary—And (2.) becauſe the Seller cannot transfer, having nothing but Bear-Skins in the Caſe, (*I mean*) a Pretence to the Intereſt, but no real Stock in the Bank.

I shall therefore leave the Allegory; when the Stock-jobbers get any Interest in Heaven, there's no doubt but they'll sell it, if they can get Money by it—But at present they have nothing to do with that Fund, so I have nothing more to say to them this Time.

But when I am moving you to Charity, 'tis not with Pulpit Oratory, or Arguments from Scripture, Sense of Duty, and the Commands of GOD—Your Ministers have Room to say enough to you on that Head, and I doubt not, but they do their Part—But this Age values themselves mightily upon their Honour, the Generosity of the *English* Nation, their Humanity, their Compassion to the Miserable—and their Pity to People in Distress——And this is the Handle I would take hold of you by.

It has been a long and deep rooted Scandal upon our Nation, *I mean the* South *Part of it*, that we are surly and unhospitable to Strangers—and I dare not undertake to defend you in it——The Misfortune is, there is too much Truth in it—but give me Leave to tell you—you seem now to have an Opportunity put into your Hands to wipe off that Reproach, and to clear your selves effectually of the Charge—Here's an Occasion to remove the Scandal, to fill all *Europe* with a Report of your Generosity, and tell the World, that the Reproach, *English* Men have so many Ages labour'd under, has been a mere Slander, or at least that the Nation has reform'd the Vice, and contrary to the Practice of their Ancestors, are become the Sanctuary and Relief of the distress'd Foreigners.

Really, Gentlemen, this unhappy Temper has been too visible among us, to abuse, affront, and insult Strangers; and if now you should put a new Spirit of Courtesie and Charity upon your Actions, you will retrieve that Reputation you lost, when the *Dutch* that came hither to bring over your Deliverer, and indeed your Deliverance,

Were paid, and curs'd, and hurry'd home again.

I am not for raking into our own Lay-Stall, nor exaggerating National Crimes; but *sure hitherto* we have the worst Name among the Nations of *Europe* for Behaviour to Strangers—and our Contempt of Foreigners——It has been bad enough in former Days——But the last Age has clinch'd the Charge upon us too firmly, and when any offers to deny it, I need give them no other Answer—but King *WILLIAM*——However, I am not now writing a Satyr—I name it only to put the Thing in a Method of Conviction—but now is your Time to retrieve your Honour. Now, Gentlemen, you may secure about ten Thousand Witnesses to testifie, to the Ages to come, your Generosity; that may prove by the Force of undeniable Demonstration, that you are chang'd, and from the most surly unhospitable People in the World, are become the kindest, most charitable, and open-handed Nation in the World.

Relieving these poor People, and opening your Hands and Hearts to them, will stop the Mouth of Railery and Satyr upon the Nation; 'twill give the Lie to the Reproach of your being cruel and hard-hearted to Strangers, and be an Eternal Honour to the Name of *Britain* in the Ages to come—The Blessing of him that is ready to perish will come upon you; the Affections of all the Men of wise, honest, and pious Principles will be knit to you, and you'll be a Pattern to your Posterity, to encrease the good Character you shall leave them.

Shall I use another Argument or two with you?—And whether you will please to believe it to be of Consequence or no, I know not, *that is as you please*; but there are Thousands among us that have felt it, and may feel it, either for Good or for Evil, in Foreign Parts—As you will have the Memory and Reputation of your Usage of these poor Refugees, influence such of your own Nation, as happen to fall into Misery and Distresses abroad, so deal with them that are the Objects of your Compassion and Charity at home.

And here give me Leave to tell you, that many an *English* Man has perish'd abroad, and been refus'd the Relief, that otherwise would have been shown them, because of the bad Treatment other Strangers have met with, when they have fallen in Distress among

among us—— And I'll tell you two Cases within my own little Knowledge, which ought to move you in the Case before us.

A Ship, I had some Concern in my self, in a violent Storm, comes a-shoar on the Coast of *Biscay*, and stranding, the Men made Signals of Distress to a *Spanish* Vessel that lay at an Anchor under the Shoar—— The Captain of which would not take the least Notice of them—tho' had he mann'd out his Boat, he might have sav'd the whole Crew; at last upon repeated Signals, two Boats from the Shoar went off and sav'd the Master, and five Men, the rest perishing before they came —— The Master afterwards meeting the Captain of the *Spanish* Ship, ask'd him, Why he would not afford his Succour, as he might have done? the *Spaniard* answer'd *with an Oath*, That if he and all his Men had swam to his Ship Side, he would not have taken one of them up, tho' they had been to be drowned in his Sight, and he gave this Reason for it—— That having been shipwreck'd somewhere on the Coast of *England*, the People, instead of saving him and his Ship, came off and robb'd him, tore the Ship almost to pieces, and left him and his Men to swim a-shoar for their Lives, while they plunder'd the Cargoe—Upon which he and his whole Crew had sworn never to help an *English* Man, in whatever Distress he should find them, whether at Sea or on Shoar.

If our cruel Coast-People do not believe, that many an *English* Man has been sacrifiz'd abroad to the Resentment of their Barbarities, in the Case of Shipwrecks and Distresses on our Coast, they are very much mistaken.

On the other hand, Acts of Kindness done to Strangers in *England* shall oftentimes turn to the Advantage of our own People, when they come abroad, and fall into Distresses in other Countries—— If then you will be well treated abroad, if you will be taken up when shipwreck'd, if you will be clothed and fed, when you may be found naked and starv'd abroad—as many of our People come daily into such Circumstances——begin at home, and shew your selves a Nation of Pity and Compassion to miserable Strangers, that others may show your distress'd Friends the same Beneficence.

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